

NO: **R129**

COUNCIL DATE: **June 11, 2012**

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## REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **June 1, 2012**

FROM: **General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture**

FILE: **6140-20/G**

SUBJECT: **The Greenways Plan 2012 – Connecting Communities**

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## RECOMMENDATION

The Parks, Recreation and Culture Department recommends that Council:

1. Receive this report as information; and
2. Approve the Greenways Plan – 2012, which is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

## INTENT

This report summarizes the key elements of a new Greenways Plan for the City and seeks Council's approval of the proposed Plan, which is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

## BACKGROUND

The Parks Recreation and Culture Strategic Plan (2008 to 2017) includes as one of its top five priorities "*a more comprehensive system of trails and green connections*". The Strategic Plan recommends that the Parks, Recreation and Culture Department "*update the City's Greenway Master Plan in consultation with the Engineering and Planning Departments.*"

Based on this recommendation, the Parks, Recreation & Culture Department, working closely with staff from the Transportation Division and from the Planning and Development Department, has prepared an updated Greenways Plan for the continued implementation of Greenways throughout the City. The updated Plan is called "**The Greenways Plan 2012 - Connecting Communities.**" The Plan is a high level policy document focused on guiding the implementation of greenways across the City to create a complete network of these multi-use pathways for recreational use and as a transportation alternative for Surrey residents. The Greenways Plan is closely aligned with the Walking Plan that has recently been completed by the Engineering Department. The Greenways Plan is organized in the same manner as the Walking Plan and the Cycling Plan, which is currently being prepared, since these three documents are closely aligned with one another.

This report provides an overview of the proposed Greenways Plan and the actions that will be incorporated into the work plans of City Departments toward implementing the recommendations of the Plan.

## **DISCUSSION**

A “greenway” is “a paved, multi-purpose pathway that is separated from motor vehicles and is intended for the use of pedestrians, cyclists and other non-motorized users”. A greenway may be in a linear park or a utility Right-of-Way that is totally separated from the road system or it may be adjacent to, but separated from a roadway. A greenway may be constructed by a developer as a component of a land development project or it may be constructed by the City under the City’s Capital program. Approximately 80% of Surrey’s Greenways have been constructed by the Engineering Department. Greenways are both important recreation amenities and important components of the transportation infrastructure for commuters within the City.

The importance of trails, greenways, walking and cycling is mentioned in many of City policy documents and plans, including the Sustainability Charter; the Official Community Plan; the Transportation Strategic Plan; the Walking Plan; and the Parks, Recreation and Culture Strategic Plan. These plans promote walking and cycling as critical components of a healthy and active community and as viable, sustainable alternatives to travel by automobile.

The development of the Greenways Plan was guided by an Advisory Committee comprised of representatives from the Parks, Recreation and Culture Department, the Engineering Department and the Planning and Development Department.

### **Public Engagement:**

Public input into development of the Plan was gathered by means of several workshops and an on-line survey. The draft Plan was presented to the public at an Open House in December 2011. In addition, two presentations regarding the Plan were made to the Parks, Recreation and Culture Committee at different points during its development.

### **Vision:**

The guiding Vision for the Greenways Plan is:

#### **“Building Individual and Community Connections through Greenways”**

The purpose of the Greenways Plan is to:

- Provide a framework for the implementation of an expanded network of greenways across the City;
- Establish general policies for greenway routing and design;
- Provide the general layout of the Greenway Network;
- Assist in integrating greenway planning with land-use planning; and
- Assist with operational decision-making across City Departments in relation to the construction and operation of the greenways in the City.

## **Principles and Strategic Directions:**

The Greenways Plan is guided by the following Principles and Strategic Objectives:

- 1. Community Connections: The Importance of Networks**  
Strategic Objective: Achieve a continuous and connected network of greenway routes that link people to parks, libraries, recreation and cultural centres, retail areas, town centres, employment areas and points of interest throughout the community.
- 2. Shaping Surrey: New Opportunities from New Development**  
Integrate greenways planning with strategic land use planning and facilitate development that supports greenway connections.
- 3. Continuous Improvement: Coordinate, Partner and Advocate**  
Continuously enhance the greenways network by promoting greenways, leveraging funds and coordinating projects.
- 4. Quality Design and Management: Accessibility, Safety and comfort**  
Create and manage a greenways environment that is accessible, safe, comfortable and interesting to use.

## **Map of Greenways Network:**

The map that is included on page 110 of the Plan illustrates the proposed Greenway Network for the City and is one of the fundamental elements of the Plan.

## **Action Steps:**

To achieve the objectives of the Greenways Plan, a number of “Actions for Change” have been included in the Plan. These Actions for Change will be incorporated in annual Departmental work plans. The following are examples of the Actions for Change contained in the Plan:

### **Community Connections: The Importance of Networks**

- Regularly review and update the City’s Greenway Map as new opportunities emerge for improved routing options and connectivity.
- Ensure that a greenway loop is incorporated into the physical fabric of each of the Town Centres in Surrey’s distinct communities.
- Review existing greenway connectors and document sections needed to connect the six distinct communities to each other.

### **Shaping Surrey: New Opportunities from New Development**

- Ensure that NCPs take advantage of greenways to interconnect parks, neighbourhood and Town Centre destinations and routes to school.

- In redeveloping areas, where an NCP has not been prepared, examine opportunities to modify the development review process to ensure that greenway construction is considered as part of the development approval process.
- Identify the land acquisition priorities for greenway corridors on an annual basis and as part of each NCP planning process.

### **Continuous Improvement: Coordinate, Partner and Advocate**

- Conduct joint capital program planning sessions involving the Parks Division and the Engineering Transportation Division.
- Develop a public consultation strategy regarding the implementation of greenway sections within existing neighbourhoods and undertake an appropriate public consultation process prior to each greenway construction project.
- Seek out new grants and other funding opportunities from other agencies and orders of government.
- Engage the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee and Surrey farmers in a discussion regarding the public use of dykes with a view to creating little or no impact on adjacent farms.

### **Quality Design and Management: Accessibility, Safety and comfort**

- Apply CPTED (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design) principles to the location, design and maintenance of the greenway network.
- Update the Greenway Proximity Study (2001) related to the impact of greenways on crime and property values.
- Adopt universal access design criteria for the greenway network. Use furniture that is universally accessible and of high quality.
- Continue to improve the aesthetics of the greenways by using innovative treatments, larger trees, decorative paving, public art and generally high-quality materials and finishes.
- Introduce more public art along the greenway network, particularly at special and distinct community rest areas.

## **SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

The development of greenways will assist in meeting the objectives of the City's Sustainability Charter; more specifically, goal EN13 which states:

*“The City will support sustainability through the public realm by (3.) Expediting the completion of a continuous greenway, bicycle and trail system throughout the City.”*

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the above discussion it is recommended that Council adopt the **Greenways Plan 2012**, which is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

Laurie Cavan  
General Manager,  
Parks, Recreation and Culture

## **Appendix 1 – “The Greenways Plan 2012 – Connecting Communities”**

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**COPIES OF APPENDIX 1**

**GREENWAYS PLAN**

**(May 2012)**

**ARE AVAILABLE  
AT THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE**